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**ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE EIGHTH ANNUAL
CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF BIBLICAL
INSTRUCTORS IN AMERICAN COLLEGES
AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

(Held in New York City December, 1918.)

**NECESSARY READJUSTMENTS IN OUR COLLEGE
CURRICULUM.**

(Profesor W. H. Wood.)

A new age, new conditions, and a new emphasis necessarily demand readjustments. This call should be easily and readily met by Biblical teachers because for the last ten or fifteen years we have been doing our best to effect the adjustment of Biblical courses not only to meet the changing times but also to lead the modern thinkers into the new world of religious and moral reconstruction. The main question now is: what are the new conditions demanding changes in the courses we should offer?

Some of these are old ones and some are new. We can perhaps classify out the more prominent of these modern obtrusive conditions under six heads. The first is the one frequently mentioned, that the youth of today must be taught and impressed with the compelling sense of the oughtness of life. We are developing men intellectually and giving them practical preparation for life but there is a lamentable lack of any sense of the moral and religious outlook upon life and oughtness for moral and social living. The second is that there is now present in our world a new moral sense which has been aroused and developed by the war and war conditions. Many men have seen the eternal face to face, we have fought a war purely for idealistic purposes and we are obsessed with the rightness and justice and humanity of justice, righteousness and humanity. At this moment these moral social and religious ideals have the supremacy in our thinking and our will. The third is the growing demand on the part of writers and thinkers generally for what they term thinking in the large and thinking things through to their farthest implications. College teachers must become more than mere academicians. They must see beyond the limits

of the trained specialist out into the farthest reaches of society and life.

The fourth is that all college teaching must bear a distinctly social emphasis. That we are in the midst of a tremendous social upheaval is generally recognized but to those who seem to see a little more clearly this is more than mere upheaval. It is practical revolution. We sit upon a volcano and until civilization is placed upon a secure basis all college study and teaching should place this problem in the very center of interest. The fifth is the disturbing fact that the church is not sufficiently awake to the conditions of our new world and apparently is not equipped with either the tools or the spirit to lead it through the impending crisis. It was said at the beginning of the war that the church had run to cover during the tempest and was staying in awaiting the return of sunny skies. The fear then arose that she would emerge unchanged by the experiences which daily were making new men and a new world, and afterwards would go on in her old way. How true this prophecy was may be judged by a statement made recently by a college president. He wrote that it seemed as if every religious organization and fanatic in America had turned loose in a violent effort to promote each its own narrow and partisanism or dogma. Whatever may be the truth here it is evident to every one that it is the psychologists, sociologists, scientists and literateurs who are today moulding the moral and religious life of thinking men and women. The sixth is that the old antagonism to clericalism and traditionalism which compelled the Biblical teacher to confine himself to strictly academic work so-called has undergone a change. This change is by no means in favor of a return to either of these ancient and persistent evils but it is a decided turn in favor of the teaching of morality and religion. We are not asked to drop our technique nor to be less historical and scientific, but there is a decided liberalism toward the courses in historical and practical religion and morality. We are asked to emphasize the religious and moral significance of the Bible history and teaching as well as the scientific truth and cold facts. The men in the departments of philosophy, science, literature and sociology who are doing this very thing now look to the Bible

department to shoulder its responsibility in the matter. The only desire is that we do our work as modern educators.

These conditions, if they fairly represent the thought of the day, demand of us certain readjustments. While maintaining our two fundamental courses in Biblical history and Biblical literature there seems to be a call to stress four others. By Biblical history is meant a broad extensive course which shall trace the evolution of the Hebrew, Jewish and Christian thought and civilization both within the boundaries of their own life and that of the peoples with whom they lived in intimate relations. This course will illuminate democratic and sociological as well as moral and religious attainments. By Biblical literature is meant the course which will initiate the student into the modern method of studying the Bible and give him the modern scientific attitude toward both the Bible itself and the religion of the Hebrews, Jews and Christians.

The first of these four special courses now needed will be one which may be entitled "What Christianity Is." Every one supposes that he knows precisely the essence of Christianity, therefore such a course is necessary both to dissipate this idea and to open up the problem. The only way to arrive at that desired goal is to study and teach. There never was a time when such a course was more needed.

The second would be a course in "The Philosophy of Religion." By philosophy is meant in simplest terms the knowledge of the subject, assessed and systematized. The end sought here will be to study the Old Testament and the New Testament religions in relation to the other religions of the world. The historical study can then be followed up by an intensive study of religion itself. This work is being done by thinking men today but is not being sufficiently developed in our colleges. Such a study is absolutely necessary if we are to have the conviction that Christianity is the superior religion and to have the wisdom and power to Christianize our civilization.

The third will be a course in "Christian Sociology." Some might name this "The Sociology of the Bible" or "The Christian Philosophy of Society." The aim would be to clarify those teachings of religion and morality which bear

upon the building up of the ideal society and the establishing of ideal social relations. It would involve a study of Christian ethics and modern applications. This ground is being covered by sociologists who however are hampered in their work by inadequate and antiquated conceptions of the Bible itself.

The fourth is one commonly designated as "The Church and the Community." To some this would be a practical course intended to train men and women for religious work in our rural sections. The college, it is urged, should help the church by giving her these trained workers. To others this course would have a wider scope in its aim to develop the communal consciousness. Since we have left behind our old individualism it would seem as if the college could do no better work than to urge and sustain such training in practical socialism.

Whether these courses are the ones to help solve our immediate problems I leave for your discussion. They are all fundamentally social ones as can be seen at a glance. My personal conviction is that we should relate our work to the new conditions of the hour. We must also relate our courses to the leading ones in our colleges and universities. Perhaps some of the church colleges can do practical training of church workers but I am not convinced that all colleges should make the attempt.

HOW TO MAKE OUR TEACHING CONTRIBUTE TO THE PERMANENT PEACE OF THE WORLD.

(Prof. George A. Barton.)

First of all, in order to contribute by our Biblical teaching to the permanent peace of the world, we must teach our pupils the critical method of studying the Bible, help them to discriminate between the human and the divine element in it, and try to gain for its highest spiritual message an abiding place in their thought and affections. Modern study has made it clear that inspiration was not dictation on the part of the Holy Spirit to a human amanuensis. It was the creation in the soul of spiritual aspirations and an experience by the soul of a spiritual fellowship which raised the